

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 11 and 21; cancel Claims 8, 10, 18, 20, 28 and 30; and add new Claims 31-36, all as shown below. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

1. (Currently Amended) A system for loading software applications, comprising:  
a server for providing a software application, wherein said software application has includes a number plurality of modules and classes associated therewith;  
a control file, that can be edited by a software developer and associated with said software application, wherein said control file specifies a hierarchy of classloaders to be used with the modules in said software application, and wherein the hierarchy includes a plurality of branches that are specified by the software developer to provide namespace separation between different modules in the software application; and[[,]]  
a deployment mechanism that loads with said software application a selection of said classloaders according corresponding to the hierarchy specified by said control file, including, if a module in said software application is being redeployed then loading only the classloaders in the branches for that module, independently of other branches in the hierarchy.
2. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said control file can be modified by a software developer to specify a particular hierarchy of classloaders to be used with a particular software application.
3. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein said control file is a deployment descriptor.
4. (Original) The system of claim 3 wherein said control file is interpreted by an application container constructor during deployment so as to define the application container.
5. (Original) The system of claim 4 wherein said interpretation includes traversing the hierarchy and building parent child relationships between the tiers of selected classloaders.

6. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said hierarchy is specified by a classloader structure declaration.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein a combination of said modules may be associated with a plurality of subordinate classloaders.

8. (Canceled).

9. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the server provides multiple software applications, each with their own hierarchy of classloaders.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended) A method for loading software applications on a server, comprising the steps of:

providing a software application, wherein said software application ~~has~~ includes a number plurality of modules and classes associated therewith;

parsing a control file associated with said software application, wherein said control file can be edited by a software developer and specifies a hierarchy of classloaders to be used with the modules in said software application, and wherein the hierarchy includes a plurality of branches that are specified by the software developer to provide namespace separation between different modules in the software application;

retrieving a selection of said classloaders according to the hierarchy specified by said control file; and[[,]]

loading said modules and classes as part of said software application according corresponding to said hierarchy, including, if a module in said software application is being redeployed then loading only the classloaders in the branches for that module, independently of other branches in the hierarchy.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein said control file can be modified by a software developer to specify a particular hierarchy of classloaders to be used with a particular software application.
13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said control file is a deployment descriptor.
14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein said control file is interpreted by an application container constructor during deployment so as to define the application container.
15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein said interpretation includes traversing the hierarchy and building parent child relationships between the tiers of selected classloaders.
16. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein said hierarchy is specified by a classloader structure declaration.
17. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein a combination of said modules may be associated with a plurality of subordinate classloaders.
18. (Canceled).
19. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the server provides multiple software applications, each with their own hierarchy of classloaders.
20. (Canceled).
21. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium including instructions stored thereon which when executed cause the computer to perform the steps of  
providing a software application, wherein said software application ~~has~~ includes a number plurality of modules and classes associated therewith;

parsing a control file associated with said software application, wherein said control file can be edited by a software developer and specifies a hierarchy of classloaders to be used with the modules in said software application, and wherein the hierarchy includes a plurality of branches that are specified by the software developer to provide namespace separation between different modules in the software application;

retrieving a selection of said classloaders according to the hierarchy specified by said control file; and[[,]]

loading said modules and classes as part of said software application according corresponding to said hierarchy, including, if a module in said software application is being redeployed then loading only the classloaders in the branches for that module, independently of other branches in the hierarchy.

22. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein said control file can be modified by a software developer to specify a particular hierarchy of classloaders to be used with a particular software application.

23. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 22 wherein said control file is a deployment descriptor.

24. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 23 wherein said control file is interpreted by an application container constructor during deployment so as to define the application container.

25. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24 wherein said interpretation includes traversing the hierarchy and building parent child relationships between the tiers of selected classloaders.

26. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein said hierarchy is specified by a classloader structure declaration.

27. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein a combination of said modules may be associated with a plurality of subordinate classloaders.

28. (Canceled).

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein the server provides multiple software applications, each with their own hierarchy of classloaders.

30. (Canceled).

31. (New) The system of claim 1 wherein each of the plurality of modules is one of an EJB or Web application file, together with associated classes, configuration rules and resource files for that EJB or Web application file.

32. (New) The system of claim 1 wherein the hierarchy that includes a plurality of branches specified by the software developer further comprises a plurality of nested references to modules and/or individual class files as specified by the software developer.

33. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein each of the plurality of modules is one of an EJB or Web application file, together with associated classes, configuration rules and resource files for that EJB or Web application file.

34. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein the hierarchy that includes a plurality of branches specified by the software developer further comprises a plurality of nested references to modules and/or individual class files as specified by the software developer.

35. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein each of the plurality of modules is one of an EJB or Web application file, together with associated classes, configuration rules and resource files for that EJB or Web application file.

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36. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 21 wherein the hierarchy that includes a plurality of branches specified by the software developer further comprises a plurality of nested references to modules and/or individual class files as specified by the software developer.